

Wolfgang SB 374

Thank you Chairwomen Gerratana and Johnson and other members of the Joint Committee on Public Health for accepting my testimony. My name is Leslie Wolfgang from Waterbury. I am testifying against Senate Bill 374, An Act Requiring Behavioral Health Assessments for Children, because mandating behavior assessments for the general population just seems wrong and unfair. I am the homeschooling mother of 6 children and can't make all of the financial and time commitments for getting assessments. Between soccer practice, ballet class, horseback riding and other more pressing obligations like dental and physical checkups and schooling, it will be a huge burden on a large family like ours. Who will schedule these assessments, where will they take place, who will pay for them? - I know the answer to these questions and it will be the same answer as to many questions . . . it will be me, the mother. Me and other mothers who are already very busy with the tasks of raising families and very often working to support their family.

And then there is the problem of why? By what reasoning should healthy children across Connecticut be assessed when in every account of Sandy Hook and similar tragedies I've read, the parents knew very well that their children needed behavioral help, but that help was elusive. I suggest that the large amounts of money and scarce psychiatric resources that would be dedicated to assessing the general population would be better spent making treatment in Connecticut easier to get and more organized.

Then there is the problem of what will be done with these assessments. It doesn't take a conspiracy theorist to know that once these tests become enshrined in law, only a few revisions to that law would permit the results of the test to be sent to the State. How else really, will the State monitor quality?

Another problem of course is authority. By what authority will the state have to require these tests? My children are not a "suspect class" and have done nothing to cause the state to require an assessment. As I understand, these behavioral tests can and must be quite probing. How can this law possibly conform with my children's Constitutional right against unwarranted searches? I'd also note that it seems biased and unfair that only publicly-educated and home-educated children are included in this proposed law. I understand there may be judicial reasons why privately-educated children are excluded, but to me, that just adds to the injustice.

Thank you for your time, I hope your Committee will abandon this proposed law and funnel scarce resources towards treatment and not testing.

Sincerely,
Leslie Wolfgang, Esq.
Waterbury